I: Gurdon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 AR7 Khasi AR7

impossible to state, as it is to fix upon the exact tract of country from which the Aryans sprang. With reference to the Khasi branch of the Mon-Annam family, it would seem reasonable to suppose that if they are not the autochthons of a portion of the hills on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra, and if they migrated to Assam from some other country, it is not unlikely that they followed the direction of the different irruptions of foreign peoples into Assam of which we have authentic data, i.e. from south-east to north-west, as was the case with the Ahom invaders of Assam who invaded Assam from their settlements in the Shan States on the Patkoi range, the different Burmese invasions, the movements of the Khamtis and, again, the Singphos, from the country to the east of the Hukong Valley. Whether the first cousins of the Khasis, the Mons, moved to their present abode from China, whether they are the aborigines of the portion of Burma they at present occupy, or were one of the races "of Turanian origin" who, as Forbes thinks, originally occupied the valley of the Ganges before the Aryan invasion, must be left to others more qualified than myself to determine. Further, it is difficult to clear up the mystery of the survival, in an isolated position, of people like the Ho-Mundas, whose language and certain customs exhibit points of similarity with those of the Khasis, in close proximity to the Dravidian tribes and at a great distance from the Khasis, there being no people who exhibit similar characteristics inhabiting countries situated in between; but we can, I think, reasonably suppose that the Khasis are an offshoot of the Mon people of Further India in the light of the historical fact I have quoted, i.e. that the movements of races into Assam have usually, although not invariably, taken place from the east, and not from the west. The tendency for outside people to move into Assam from the east still continues.

Addendum.

The late Mr. S. E. Peal, F.R.G.S., in an interesting and suggestive paper published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* in 1886, drew attention to certain illustrations of

19: Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1967 AR7 Khasi AR7

wife who lives with him. The Khasi woman lives with her mother. Some say the Khasi woman is his second wife, other say their marriage is not recognized by the public.

Actually, owing to the bad climate, very few non-Khasi live in this area. Besides the two non-Khasi just mentioned, there were a Bengalee tax collector and an Assamese Forest Officer, both of whom lived at Shella Bazaar. Bengalee villages are situated about five miles south of Shella. Except in the bazaar, Bengalee and Khasi have no social contact with each other, and intermarriages have been rare.

However, it is obvious that in the past the Khasi must have had many cases of intermarriage with Bengalee. Among the Khasi, there is a clan called 'Dkhar.' The term 'Dkhar' is also used for the peoples of the plains; Bengalee are called 'Dkhar' by the Khasi. They say that the Dkhar clan originated in Bengalee girls who married Khasi men and who went to live in the Hills. It is said that in other days, the Khasi often raided the Sylhet plain and kidnapped Bengalee girls as well as goods. In Bengalee records of Sylhet, Khasi appear as 'bloody Khasi.' Khasi old men say that in order to increase their population they did sometimes kidnap Bengalee girls, but that they treated these girls very nicely and kindly, no differently from their own people. Since they follow the matrilineal system, they decided to name their descendants 'Dkhar.' It is said that all the present Dkhar people are descendants of such marriages. The Dkhar are found more on the southern slopes of the Khasi Hills i.e. among the War.

It seems there were many reasons for the descendants by marriage between the Khasi and the Bengalee to become Khasi. First of all, it is said that in the olden days the Khasi wanted to increase the population by such marriages. At the same time, a Bengalee who married a Khasi became an outcast from his or her own society owing to the caste system, and this inevitably made them Khasi. Secondly, the Khasi were primarily grouped into the *iing*, and they considered the marriage relation as of secondary importance. Hence it was rather difficult to remove by marriage a Khasi man or woman from their native place. Thirdly, Khasi could hardly live in the plain where no betel-nut or pan-leaf gardens were available; they could not engage in rice cultivation in the plain, as the technique is entirely different from the cultivation of betel-nut or pan-leaf. Moreover, they said they could not stand the heat in the plain. Therefore, the orientation of intermarriages was always towards the Khasi community: the Khasi brought outsiders to their own land; they did not themselves leave.

Such a marked tendency on the part of the Khasi to remain attached to their own homeland, is in no way contradictory with the phenomena of their migration to places outside the Khasi Hills, owing to the exploitation of their homeland and to the increase in population. The formation of Jaitinga representing such an instance, there are also the cases of modern Khasi women from sophisticated urban areas, who easily leave their homeland, after marriage with a non-Khasi, this also appears in the following data on Jaitinga.

Jaitinga

Jaitinga is a Khasi village situated in the North Cachar Hills, three miles east from Haflong, the headquarters of the North Cachar Hills. The number of households was about sixty in February 1956. Their economy depends on the pan-leaf, orange and pineapple gardens, similar to that of the Shella people.

thereafter, the British negotiated treaties with all the Khasi states, the last treaty being signed in 1862. It was contracted that the chiefs would be subject to the authority of a resident political agent, whose duties would involve maintaining law and order, judging cases of heinous crimes, approving the popular selection of any new chief, and exercising control over certain categories of natural resources. Khasis were guaranteed noninterference in their customary way of life, and they were not then, nor are they now, taxed. Most Khasis, as opposed to Jaintias, were never an integral part of British India, but they did undergo social change as a result of British presence. To summarize Mills (n.d.): (1) The British introduced the potato, which the Khasis rapidly took up as a cash crop for marketing as far as Calcutta. The intensive specialization exhausted the soil and made for ever-poorer crops. (2) Christian missionaries made large numbers of converts, and there arose the difficult question of whether a Christian should inherit property that traditionally was earmarked for her performance of non-Christian religious rituals. (3) About 1864 the British transferred their headquarters from Cherrapunji to Shillong. When they made Shillong the capital of the entire state of Assam, non-Khasis flocked to it, land values soared, and the concept of private property became increasingly important. Khasis began to marry with members of other ethnic groups, which introduced confusion into traditional social patterns. These problems were exacerbated during World War II, when Shillong and its environs enjoyed enormous economic prosperity. One notable aftermath of this affluence has been the accelerated enrollments in schools and colleges. Hundreds of Khasis now have the B.A., M.A., and even the Ph.D. degree. • With the Independence of India in 1947, and under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India (which was drafted by a Khasi), the United Khasi-Jaintia Hills District became a Part B, or Autonomous, Tribal Area, to be governed by a District Council composed largely of Khasis and Jaintias, and responsible not to the Legislature of Assam, but to the Governor of Assam as agent of the President of India. The native-state system and the chiefs still exist, and the District Council finds it difficult to effect legislation which is neither offensive to regional customs nor a simple blueprint of ill-fitting all-India legislation. The major political schism of this time is between Jaintias, who are accustomed to centralized authority and taxation, and Khasis, who resist the notion of taxation to support the work of a central District Council. (Cf. Gait 1906, Aitchison 1931, Bhuyan 1948, Morris 1948.)

SETTLEMENT PATTERN AND HOUSING. Settlement patterns. Khasis live endogamously in named, territorial, and unplanned villages which are situated just below hill summits to avoid strong winds but still be defensible, and which usually include a de-

East Pakistan to which the people in the border areas were entitled in the strength of various trade agreements of the Government of India with the authorities in Pakistan, were also scanty. The situation was still more aggravated due to the stringent measures adopted by authorities in Pakistan, on the plea of prevention of smuggling, in December, 1957 when the entire border trade virtually came to a standstill.

This chaos in border economy has resulted in widespread unemployment among the border people. There being no market for the produce, the owners ceased to take proper care of their orchards and plantations. As a result thousands of labourers who were employed in the orchards were thrown out of employment. Similar was the condition of those who were employed in the transportation of various commodities such as merchandise of trade etc. A large section of the people engaged in collection of limestone were also rendered unemployed with the set back received by the trade in limestone with East Pakistan. Due to stoppage of trans-border trade, petty traders engaged in distributive trade, also suffered.

Many of the border people possessing paddy lands and orchards in areas that are located in Pakistan had to abandon them. The following table will show the amount of land lying in Pakistan belonging to the farmer in the selected villages of border area :—

TABLE A-2

Name of villages	No. of families who possessed land in Pakistan	Area (acres)	Average per family (acres)
1. Dongki	97	817·00	8·41
2. Shella	9	173·40	19·40
3. Bholagunj	14	100·00	7·20
4. Balay	2	19·00	0·95
5. Mawlam	nil	..	..
6. Lyngkhat	1	01·50	1·50
7. Dawang	14	480·75	33·21
8. Syntai	2	43·21	1·44
9. Amlit	2	42·41	2·12
10. Umkarang	nil	..	..

A few families who did not have any landed interest on this side of the border were reported to have migrated to Pakistan. Most of the families are even now paying tax to East Pakistan authorities even though they are not getting any returns because they do not want to lose their right on land.

19: Assam G-5 (1958) 1963 AR7 Khasi AR7

Name of village	No. of persons according to		Variation	No. of families according to listing schedule	
	1951 Census	Present survey			
General Area—					
19. Mawhiteng	113	86	−27	20	Average size of village 18·4
20. Jyngiat	87	49	−38	7	
21. Assia	29	22	−7	5	.. ..
22. Domrya	76	36	−40	20	
23. Lamyrsiang	119	97	−22	23	Average family size 4·4
24. Ingenala	126	161	35	24	
25. Mawlyaskiew	163	159	− 4	40	
26. Jowe	48	31	−17	7	
27. Byrbah	114	106	−8	20	
28. Mawkhi	48	76	27	16	
Total ..	924	902	−22	184	.. ..

N. B.—1951 census population figures are not shown against Border Area and Project Area villages. This is because of the fact that in some cases in the Census report, the different blocks of a village have been enumerated as different villages, *e.g.*, the village **Sohkha** has been enumerated in 1951 census as three villages, *viz.*, **Sohkha Phiang, Sohkha** mission, etc., while in some other cases, only one population figure has been recorded against a number of villages of which possibly one is the main village, others being its satellites and as these villages were selected without any reference to the **Census** Handbook, there is every likelihood of our selected villages not coinciding with **Census** villages. So far as migration is concerned it is **very** rare in big villages, **particularly** when they have some settled occupation but it was found through investigation that in some of the border villages due to continued adversities in their agricultural and other occupation people had to move away in search of work. Migration of some traders was reported from **Bholagunj** and **Lyngkhat**. Some **Khasi** families **were** reported to have migrated to **Pakistan** where they had **got agricultural** land. Heaviest emigration of this type was however, reported from **Sohkha**, a village selected from **Saipung-Darrang, M. P. C. D. Block**, but located **near** the **Indo-Pak** Border, where about **one third** of its **total** population was said to have migrated to **Pakistan**. Some families from **Mawdon** are said to have migrated to a nearby village due to unhealthy condition of the village. A study of population variation in **General area** villages given above, will show that there is a **net decrease of 20 persons** in the sample villages from **total number of persons recorded** in 1951 Census. This is accounted for by migration of **people** which is considerable in smaller villages particularly those depending on **shifting** cultivation. A few families from **Mawlaiteng** are said to have migrated to **Mawlum** a village only a few **Cotang** away from **Mawlaiteng**. Migration was also reported from **Lamyrsiang, Domrya, Assia**, and **Jowe** from **Byrbah** and **Mawkyrshan** a few families were said to have left the village a few days ahead of the **date** of investigation for their cultivation at some distant place.

20: Hunter G-4 (no date) 1897 AR7 Khasi AR7

361 In the interior of the Hills the largest villages are mere clusters of
463 huts. The great majority of the inhabitants are employed in agriculture, but there are no data upon which a proportion of agriculturists to non-agriculturists could be based.

• 167 There is no immigration into the District. Both the Khásiás and
178 the Syntengs have been successful in preserving to the present day their primitive isolation, free from the interference of Hinduism. They still maintain their aboriginal forms of belief and religious worship, and repudiate alike the authority of Bráhmans and the entire system of caste. To some extent, however, they have given way to Hindu prejudices in the matter of purity of food. The few Hindus to be found in the Hills are temporary residents, engaged in civil and military employ, who always contemplate returning to their own homes. The traders are for the most part natives of the Hills; for the Márwárí merchants, who penetrate into every other corner of Assam, have been able to obtain no footing in the face of Khási competition. There is likewise no emigration from the District. The hillmen are a well-to-do and contented race, and either produce themselves or obtain by trade sufficient to satisfy their scanty wants. A certain number of both Khásiás and Syntengs proceed southwards every year to work on the tea gardens of Cáchár and Sylhet, but such absence from home is only temporary.

[771] [262] [563] [441] [166]

243 AGRICULTURE: RICE.—Thirteen different varieties of rice are cultivated in the District, of which the following is a list, giving the Khási name as well as the description of the grain:—(1) *U-kyhe-khyuriew* (*u*, the masculine article, meaning 'the,' and *kyhe*, noun masculine, meaning 'paddy'), brown rice with long grain; (2) *u-kyhe-khyuriew hoi-lik*, a white rice with long grain; (3) *u-kyhe la-tob*, round-grained rice; (4) *u-kyhe kusi*, bearded, husked; (5) *u-kyhe-diw-ha-iong*, black husked rice (literally *u* = 'the,' *kyhe* = 'paddy,' *diw* = 'earth,' *ha* = 'that,' *iong* = 'black'); (6) *u-kyhe-ha-lik*, white rice; (7) *u-kyhe-arin*, aerated rice (literally *u* = 'the,' *kyhe* = 'paddy,' *arin* = 'royal'); (8) *u-kyhe la-krok*, large-grained rice; (9) *u-kyhe-ha-tieng*, small-grained rice; (10) *u-kyhe sa-kia*, early rice; (11) *u-kyhe ru-kem*, late rice; (12) *u-kyhe tang-la*, rice grown along with beans; (13) *u-kyhe-ha-tiik*, small rice.

Rice is cultivated in marshy fields situated near running water as well as in high lands. The first seven of the above thirteen species of rice are sown in marshy lands during the months of April and May,